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Security Council

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**Letter dated 19 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on the work of the Security Council for the month of July 2016 during the presidency of Japan (see annex). The document was prepared under my own responsibility, following consultations with other members of the Council.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Koro **Bessho**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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## Annex to the letter dated 19 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

## Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Japan (July 2016)

### Introduction

During the month of July 2016, under the presidency of Japan, the Security Council held 23 formal meetings and 18 consultations of the whole, issued 11 press statements, adopted 7 resolutions and 3 presidential statements and issued 1 presidential note on working methods. The Council held 3 meetings with troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

### Selection of the Secretary-General

Japan, as President of the Security Council for the month of July 2016, coordinated in detail the finalization by the Council of the modalities of the straw polls, and organized the first straw poll on 21 July.

The Security Council also discussed the selection of the next Secretary-General at the consultation of the whole on 25 July under the item entitled "Other matters", during which Council members discussed the confidentiality of the straw polls and the way forward.

During the month of July, nine informal meetings with the candidates for the position of Secretary-General were held, a process that was introduced in June 2016 after extensive discussions within the Security Council.

### Africa

#### Sudan and South Sudan

The Security Council issued a press statement on 1 July that noted with alarm the increased conflict in Wau, South Sudan, and called on all armed parties to cease hostilities. There was a meeting on 7 July of troop-contributing countries for UNMISS. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, conducted a briefing. A press statement was issued on 9 July that condemned the fighting in Juba and the separate attacks on United Nations and diplomatic officials that had occurred in Juba on 7 July.

On 10 July, informal consultations of the whole were held. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Security Council on his views on the background and developments surrounding the incidents, as well as on the status of the severe restrictions imposed on UNMISS movement in Juba. Council members strongly condemned the clashes and demanded an immediate end to the violence by all concerned, as well as control and discipline over military forces. The Council also discussed the regional force being considered by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) as well as methods for fortifying UNMISS. The Council issued a press statement after the meeting.

The Security Council met again on 13 July for a briefing on South Sudan from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. He described large-scale displacement, civilian deaths and violations of United Nations protection of civilian sites. He insisted that UNMISS and humanitarian actors be allowed free movement and access. He also noted an IGAD communiqué calling for a troop increase and the creation of an intervention brigade, which had also been endorsed by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The Under-Secretary-General concluded by urging the Council to consider an arms embargo in the light of deliberate attempts to derail the peace agreement of August 2015, and recommended a one-month technical rollover of the UNMISS mandate. During informal consultations, Council members and the Under-Secretary-General were joined for interactive discussions by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, Ellen Margrethe Løj, who participated from Juba by way of videoconference. Discussions focused on the possibility of intensifying violence, the command and control of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, the need for political pressure and political dialogue, approaches for fortifying UNMISS and the imposition of an arms embargo and targeted sanctions.

On 29 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2302 (2016) to authorize a technical rollover of the mandate of UNMISS until 12 August.

**Somalia**

On 7 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2297 (2016), which extended the authorization of the African Union Mission in Somalia until 31 May 2017. China, Egypt and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made statements after the vote.

**Somalia and Eritrea**

The Security Council held consultations of the whole on 20 July to discuss the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea. The Council heard the report from the Chair of the Committee. With regard to Somalia, many Council members voiced concern about the present situation, while noting progress on the political discussions, and stressed that the Council must continue to support the political process.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo**

A briefing and consultations of the whole on the Democratic Republic of the Congo were held on 7 July. The Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, briefed the Security Council, stressing his concern with regard to the increase in political tensions due to electoral delays. He also expressed concern about recent attacks on civilians in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He said he was encouraged, though, by the resumption of cooperation between the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Democratic Republic of the Congo also took the floor under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. Active discussion by Council members about the situation was conducted in the consultations of the whole.

On the basis of the above consultations, the Security Council issued a press statement on 15 July that stressed the crucial importance of a peaceful and credible electoral cycle, in accordance with the country's Constitution, for stability, development and the consolidation of constitutional democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council, among other things, also underscored the

urgent need to convene an open, inclusive and peaceful political dialogue among all stakeholders focused on the holding of elections, and expressed support for the decision taken by the African Union to undertake consultations on that dialogue.

**Central African Republic**

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Atul Khare, briefed troop- and police-contributing countries in a private meeting on 8 July. That was followed by a briefing in the Security Council Chamber and consultations of the whole. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Chair of the Central African Republic country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Omar Hilale, were invited to brief the Council under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. The former presented outcomes of the strategic review on MINUSCA and its recommendations for the Mission's next mandate. The Chair of the Central African Republic configuration presented five areas of priority from the peacebuilding point of view. The Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations also briefed the Council in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic about his visit to the country from 24 to 27 May. The Central African Republic participated in the meeting under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, but did not make a statement.

The Security Council adopted resolution 2301 (2016) unanimously on 26 July, extending the Mission's mandate until 15 November 2017. It decided that the Mission's strategic objective was to support the creation of conditions conducive to the sustainable reduction of the presence of, and threat posed by, armed groups. The Central African Republic and France made statements after the adoption of the resolution.

**United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel**

The Security Council had a briefing and consultations of the whole on 11 July. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mohamed Ibn Chambas, briefed the Council and presented the first report of the newly combined UNOWAS office. As instability and terrorist networks were continuing to fuel extremism in the region, he urged the further strengthening of the Multinational Joint Task Force and increased efforts to meet the basic needs of civilians. In the consultations that followed, the merger of the Offices and the hope for increased synergies were discussed. Council members expressed concern about the various political tensions and cross-cutting threats to peace in the region, and in particular the humanitarian impact of Boko Haram.

Following those discussions, on 28 July the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2016/11), which welcomed the earlier briefing by the Special Representative, the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS (S/2016/566) and the merger of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and the United Nations Office for West Africa, and reiterated the Council's continued support. Through the presidential statement, the Council commended the work of regional groups and neighbours in order to promote peace and stability in West Africa and the Sahel. The Council noted its concern with regard to the continued terrorism and piracy in the region.

### Libya

On 22 July, the Security Council met in consultations of the whole to discuss the ongoing political situation in Libya, and in particular the challenges delaying progress and the existence of foreign terrorist fighters. Council members were briefed by both the Assistant-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Taye-Brook Zerihoun, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Martin Kobler. Council members expressed deep concern about the presence of foreign terrorist fighters and discussed ways to improve and strengthen governance in Libya. After the meeting, the Council welcomed the meeting of the Libyan political dialogue and the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord through a press statement, reaffirming their support for the Special Representative's efforts to bring together the parties concerned.

Also on 22 July, the Security Council adopted resolution 2298 (2016) by a unanimous vote. Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council authorized Member States to acquire, control, transport, transfer and destroy chemical weapons identified by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in Libya, after such a course of action was adopted by the OPCW Executive Council. China, Egypt, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America made statements after the vote.

### Western Sahara

The situation in Western Sahara was discussed at the consultations of the whole on 15 July under the item entitled "Other matters". Further discussion was conducted at the consultations of the whole on 26 July. The Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), Kim Bolduc. While welcoming the progress achieved thus far, Council members expressed the strong hope that MINURSO would return to full functionality as soon as possible and urged the resumption of direct negotiations for the provision of the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

### Peace and security in Africa

On 27 July, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, briefed the members of the Security Council on the ongoing challenges faced by West Africa in combating Boko Haram. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs underscored the need for more funding for the Multinational Joint Task Force so that it would be able to maintain the gains it had made. He cited high youth unemployment as a reason for terrorist groups' successful recruitment. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs warned that the humanitarian situation was difficult in the region as a result of violence, environmental degradation and extreme poverty. As an extreme example of the situation, he pointed out that, in the far northern region of Cameroon, the number of people needing immediate food aid had quadrupled to more than 200,000 since June 2015.

All members of the Security Council took the floor. They were united in their concern for the desperate humanitarian situation and cited poverty, terrorism, organized crime and climate change among the challenges facing the region. Some members emphasized the need to maintain protection for human rights while

combating terrorist groups. Members welcomed the progress of the Multinational Joint Task Force.

**Peacebuilding in Africa**

On 28 July, Japan convened an open debate at the ministerial level on peacebuilding in Africa, chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Fumio Kishida. The debate was based on a concept paper distributed by Japan (see S/2016/586, annex).

The Secretary-General made an opening remark. While noting the continued existence of conflicts on the continent, he stressed that such conflicts were not the whole picture, referring to improvements made in economies and living standards and the expansion of democratic space. He advised the international community to help both countries in need and developing countries, and that one way to do that was to invest in institution-building. The Secretary-General underscored several lessons learned with regard to institution-building during the past years, including that there was no one size-fits-all solution, that a solution should be rooted in political agreement and that the international community must understand that institution-building was a long-term process. The Secretary-General also stated that this last point was particularly important for the Security Council when it was designing mandates. In addition, the Secretary-General stressed that the Peacebuilding Commission provided an important platform to help focus the attention of relevant actors on long-term institution-building, to share lessons learned and to sustain the engagement of the international community. The Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Kenya, Amina Chawahir Mohamed, and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Smail Chergui, also made statements.

In addition to the members of the Security Council, 32 speakers participated. Many participants mentioned the need for predictable financing support for African initiatives. Member States highlighted their own initiatives on the continent, which demonstrated the serious attention given to the issue. On the same occasion, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2016/12) reaffirming the importance of the topic. It emphasized the fact that peacebuilding was an inherently political process. It also noted the important role the African Union and national strategies had in peacebuilding. It stressed that there should be long-term development strategies and efforts to address the root causes of conflicts.

**Burundi**

On 29 July, the Security Council adopted resolution 2303 (2016) by 11 votes to none, with 4 abstentions. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations police component in Burundi for an initial period of one year to monitor the security situation and to support the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in monitoring human rights violations and abuses, and to strengthen the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on conflict prevention, including in Burundi. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council, in close coordination with the African Union, on proposals to enable the United Nations to facilitate the deployment of African Union observers, and to report on modalities for cooperation between the United Nations police component and the African Union observers. All members spoke after the vote.

## Middle East

### Lebanon

On 7 July, the Security Council held its periodic consultations of the whole on the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) concerning the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) (S/2016/572). Council members discussed the positive work of UNIFIL in the fragile situation facing Lebanon, in particular with regard to the state of terrorism and the issue of refugees in the country.

On 22 July, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2016/10) expressing its deep concern with regard to the continued vacancy of the office of the presidency. The presidential statement underlined that the vacancy and the resulting political paralysis hurt the ability of Lebanon to handle growing security, economic, social and humanitarian challenges. The statement also stressed that stability of Lebanon was important to the stability of the region as a whole.

### The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The report of the Middle East Quartet,[1] which was released on 1 July, was actively discussed by the members of the Security Council at the consultations of the whole on 11 July under the item entitled "Other matters".

The quarterly open debate was held on 12 July. The Secretary-General highlighted the 10 recommendations of the Quartet report. He warned that time was running out, underscoring that, as negative trends grew more frequent, the prospects for a two-State solution grew more distant. Stressing that the failure of Israeli and Palestinian leaders to advance peace had created a vacuum which extremist voices had filled, he stated that recent incidents of violence had reinforced the mounting risks. The Secretary-General, referring to recent developments in settlement construction and expansion, emphasized that such settlements were in flagrant disregard of international law. The Secretary-General urged practical action from the parties, regional actors and the international community to secure peace in the Middle East. Speakers called for an immediate end to violence from both sides and new strategies to create peace. Many speakers also underscored the illegal nature of Israeli settlements.

Under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, 23 Member States, including Israel, took the floor. Under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and a representative of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People participated in the open debate. Representatives of the Holy See and the State of Palestine were also invited and took part in the meeting.

### Syrian Arab Republic

Consultations of the whole were held on the Syrian Arab Republic on 22 July to hear an update on the issue of chemical weapons in that country by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Kim Won-soo. Security Council members reiterated their support for the United Nations and OPCW in fulfilling Council resolutions.

The Security Council also considered the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic in a briefing and consultations of the whole on 25 July. The Under-

[1] Available from https://fmep.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Quartet-Report-2016.pdf.

Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator said that "words are not adequate" to describe the situation facing Syrians (see S/PV.7744). He described increased fighting, affecting civilians and civilian infrastructure. He cited specifically the situation in Aleppo. The Under-Secretary-General said that the United Nations can help when it is given access. He urged the Council to increase pressure on the parties involved to ensure that the United Nations received adequate protection and access. He also called for an end to all sieges. All members took the floor in the chamber following the Under-Secretary-General's briefing. While all members expressed concern about the humanitarian situation, there were differences in opinion as to how it should be addressed. In the consultations of the whole that followed, the Council discussed some of the issues raised by the Under-Secretary-General, including his suggestion of a weekly 48-hour pause to allow humanitarian access by United Nations agencies.

### Iraq

On 5 July, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning terrorist attacks in Baghdad. On 15 July, the Council was briefed with regard to its periodic consideration of the situation in Iraq and the relationship between Iraq and Kuwait. Iraq was invited to participate under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Ján Kubiš, highlighted recent progress in the fight against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq, while noting that Iraq needed continued international support at that critical time. He informed the Council that Iraq had significant humanitarian needs and discussed ways in which the underfunded humanitarian appeal had a direct impact on the ground. He also urged Iraqi political and community leaders to prioritize reconciliation efforts.

Through the unanimous adoption of resolution 2299 (2016) on 25 July, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNAMI. Egypt made a brief statement after the adoption. On 29 July, a press statement on Iraq and Kuwait was issued.

### Afghanistan

The Security Council condemned the terrorist attack in Kabul through a press statement issued on 23 July. Reiterating its serious concern with regard to the threats posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, ISIL and illegal and armed groups to the local population, the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces and the international presence in Afghanistan, the Council underlined the need to bring perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of those reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice, and urged all States to cooperate actively with the Afghan authorities in that regard.

## Europe and Latin America

### Haiti

The Security Council met on 7 July, under the item entitled "Any other business", for a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the political and security situation in Haiti following his visit to the country from 30 June to 3 July. The Under-Secretary-General expressed his concern that the political situation was in crisis owing to difficulties related to the selection process of a successor candidate for the presidency, following the expiration of the provisional president's mandate on 13 June. He also explained the electoral process, the security situation and the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission

in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Concern over the political crisis in Haiti was expressed by Council members. The Council also discussed political solutions to the crisis, the reconfiguration of MINUSTAH and a strategic assessment mission in line with Security Council resolution 2243 (2015).

### Cyprus

A meeting of troop- and police-contributing countries was held on 20 July concerning the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, UNFICYP, Elizabeth Spehar, conducted a briefing. The Special Representative and the Special Adviser on Cyprus, Espen Barth Eide, briefed the Security Council in consultations of the whole on 25 July. Council members noted their strong support for the efforts by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders to reach a settlement and the role of the United Nations in the negotiations. That was followed by the unanimous adoption of resolution 2300 (2016) on 26 July, extending the UNFICYP mandate until 31 January 2017.

## Thematic issues and other matters

### Bangladesh

The Security Council issued a press statement on 2 July condemning a terrorist attack that had occurred in Dhaka on 1 July. The statement urged that all those responsible, from perpetrators to financiers and sponsors, be held accountable and brought to justice.

### Saudi Arabia

On 5 July, the Security Council condemned terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia through a press statement. The Council deplored the heinous and cowardly terrorist attacks in the cities of Qatif, Jeddah and Medina, and urged accountability for the perpetrators, urging all States to comply with measures taken to combat terrorism.

### France

A Security Council press statement was issued on 14 July condemning the terrorist attack in Nice, France.

### Non-proliferation

On 18 July, the Security Council held a briefing discussing the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). Under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs addressed the progress of implementation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. He called upon the Islamic Republic of Iran to avoid ballistic missile launches, as they could increase regional tensions.

Also under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, João Vale de Almeida, outlined the European Union's efforts as Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. He was followed by the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations, in his capacity as facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), who urged all members to follow the provisions of the resolution. All members of the Security Council made statements. While all members noted the progress achieved under the Joint Comprehensive Plan

of Action, positions varied concerning the ballistic missile launches. Council members welcomed the facilitation efforts of Spain for transparency.

Under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations was also invited to participate.

**Working methods**

In response to the decision by the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/307, to conduct the elections of the non-permanent members of the Security Council about six months before the elected members assumed their responsibilities, the Council adopted a presidential note dated 15 July (S/2016/619). A product of intensive work on the part of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions over several months, the note outlined measures to facilitate the preparations of newly elected members as well as to improve the selection process and preparations of the Chairs of subsidiary organs. In accordance with the note, the Council now invites the newly elected members of the Council to observe all meetings of the Council and its subsidiary organs and the informal consultations of the whole for a period of three months, as from 1 October immediately preceding their terms of membership, except in cases otherwise provided for in the same note. In addition, the note stated that the members of the Council should make every effort to agree provisionally on the appointment of the Chairs of the subsidiary organs for the following year no later than 1 October, with the informal process of consultations on the appointment of the Chairs of the subsidiary organs to be facilitated jointly by two members of the Council working in full cooperation.

On 19 July, on the day of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the first presidential note on the working methods of the Council (S/2006/507), the Council convened an open debate on its working methods under the item entitled "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)". The debate was based on a concept paper distributed by Japan (see S/2016/585, annex), in which it proposed that the Council, with the participation of interested delegations from the wider membership, look at the implementation of the presidential note dated 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507) and other relevant notes to identify successful practices as well as possible shortcomings, and consider making necessary adjustments. Many delegations stressed the importance of the Council's continuous efforts to improve its transparency while ensuring its ability to act effectively and efficiently. While welcoming the improvements made in recent years, including the recent adoption of the note dated 15 July 2016, many delegations called for fuller and more even implementation of the presidential notes, and looked forward to the review and updating of the note dated 26 July 2010, including with a focus on implementation, as requested in the presidential statement dated 30 October 2015 (S/PRST/2015/19).